

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5932

ANSWERED ON:04.05.2005

ANAEMIA AMONG CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN

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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that anaemia is highly prevalent in children and pregnant women in the country;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Indian Council of Medical Research and National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau have made any studies in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, state-wise; and
- (e) the corrective steps taken by the Government to check high prevalence of anaemia in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (e): According to National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-II, 51.8% of ever married women (15-49 years) were found to have anemia, 35% had mild anemia, 14.8% moderate anemia and 1.9% severe anemia. Among the anemic women, 54% were in rural areas. The overall prevalence of anemia among pregnant women was found to be 49.7%. However prevalence of moderate anemia (25.4%) and severe anemia (2.5%) was higher among pregnant compared to non pregnant women.

The survey also provided data on anemia among children six months to 3 years. As per the information available from the survey, 5.9% of male children and 4.8% of female children under the age of 3 years suffer from severe anemia. 3.2%, 6.3% and 5.6% of children in the age groups 6 to 11 months, 12 to 13 months and 24 to 35 months respectively suffer from severe anemia. A total of 5.4% of children under the age of 3 years suffer from severe anemia.

The major causes of nutritional anemia are inadequate nutrition with deficient intake of iron and folic acid in diet, inadequate absorption of iron, frequent pregnancies, high prevalence of infections and infestations and faulty feeding practices. Besides this, the requirement of iron & folic acid are more during pregnancy among women and among growing children and have to be provided for.

Indian Council of Medical Research has conducted a multi centric study in 16 districts of 13 states. The prevalence of anemia among pregnant women was 84.9%. The National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau of ICMR have also carried out survey to assess the prevalence of common micronutrient deficiencies including haemoglobin levels among the preschool children, adolescent girls and non- pregnant and non-lactating women in rural communities of 8 States during 2002- 03. The prevalence of anemia among preschool children has been found to be 67%, 41% had moderate anemia (haemoglobin 7-10 gms) and only 2% had severe anemia (haemoglobin less than 7 gms.). Statewise details of the above studies are enclosed at Annexure I & II.

Iron deficiency is a problem of inadequate nutrition. A National Nutritional Policy was formulated in 1993 and the national plan of action on nutrition is being implemented through a number of departments of Government of India including, among other, the Integrated Child Development Services Programme of Department of Women and Child Development and the Reproductive and Child Health Programme of the Department of Family Welfare for improving the nutritional status of pregnant women and children.

Under the Reproductive and Child Health Programme implemented throughout the country, pregnant women and children (1-5 years) are provided with Iron and Folic Acid tablets for prophylaxis and treatment of anemia.

Apart from health related factors illiteracy, poverty, general economic and social development has a direct bearing on the incidence of anemia among people, particularly among women. To tackle these problems, various departments of the Government are implementing programmes such as Nutrition education of the community in rural, urban and tribal areas is undertaken by the Nutrition Board of the Department of Women and Child Development with a view to create awareness about the consequences of anaemia, the locally available foods rich in iron and folic acid and how to prevent and control anemia.

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme of the Department of WCD provides supplementary food to the pregnant women/nursing mothers and children upto 6 years of age. Nutrition and health education of all women with special emphasis on pregnant and lactating women and children is also undertaken by the anganwadi worker.

Various food for work programmes, poverty alleviation programmes, targeted public distribution system contribute to improving food security for the rural population.

Research trials on double fortified salt have also been undertaken by the National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad to address the problem of nutritional anaemia in the country. Jawahar Rojgar Yojana, Integrated Rural Development Programme, Indira Awas Yojana and Adult Literacy Programme are being implemented by different agencies/departments of Government of India.

Annexure - I

Name of District	No. of Pregnant women	Non-anaemic (Hb>11g%)		Survey (Hb<11g%)		Degree of Anaemia	
		Mild (>10-	Moderate	Severe (<7 g%)			
North				10.9g%)	(7-10 g%)		
Mandi (61.0)	507	198 (39.0)		309	157 (31.0)	142 (28.0)	10 (2.0)
Dehradun (64.7)	340	120 (35.3)		220	43 (12.6)	158 (46.5)	19 (5.6)
Lakhimpur Kheri (79.4)	593	122 (20.6)		471	88 (14.8)	325 (54.8)	58 (9.8)
Badaun (80.9)	488	93 (19.1)		395	96 (19.7)	283 (58.0)	16 (3.3)
Baramullah (91.3)	504	44 (8.7)		460	46 (9.1)	342 (67.9)	72 (14.3)
Bikaner (94.9)	510	26 (5.1)		484	34 (6.7)	255 (50.0)	195 (38.2)
Mainpuri (96.0)	253	10 (4.0)		243	18 (7.1)	182 (71.9)	43 (17.0)
Srinagar (96.8)	498	16 (3.2)		482	26 (5.2)	370 (74.3)	86 (17.3)
EAST							
Kohima	69	22 (31.9)	47 (68.1)	10 (14.5)	37 (53.6)	NIL	
Bishnupur	508	117 (23.0)	391 (77.0)	76 (15.0)	313 (61.6)	2 (0.4)	
Gaya (84.1)	446	71 (15.9)	375	21 (4.7)	267 (59.9)	87 (19.5)	
Patna (90.2)	512	50 (9.8)	462	28 (5.5)	298 (58.2)	136 (26.6)	
Dibrugarh (91.4)	525	45 (8.6)	480	52 (9.9)	371 (70.7)	57 (10.8)	
Nagaon (93.9)	475	29 (6.1)	446	29 (6.1)	393 (82.7)	24 (5.1)	
SOUTH	189	15 (7.9)	174	14 (7.4)	136 (72.0)	24 (12.7)	
Mehboob Nagar			(92.1)				
WEST Raigarh	506	65 (12.8)	441 (87.2)	79 (15.6)	287 (56.7)	75 (14.8)	
ALL DISTRICTS	6923	1043 (15.1)	5880 (84.9)	817 (11.8)	4159 (60.1)	904 (13.1)	

= WHO criteria followed for classification of anaemic women. Figures in bracket indicate per cent

Source = Micronutrients Deficiency Diseases ICMR 2001

Annexure - II

Prevalence (%) of anaemia among 1-<5 years children

States	n Normal (>11 g/dl)		Anaemia		Total (CI)	
	Mild (7-10 g/dl)	Moderate (<7 g/dl)	Severe (10-11 g/dl)			
Kerala	369	66.3	20.1	13.3	0.3	33.7 (28.8, 38.4)
Tamil Nadu	407	37.3	22.4	36.1	4.2	62.7 (58.0, 67.3)
Karnataka	425	33.6	20.7	43.3	2.4	66.4 (61.9, 70.9)
Andhra Pd.	448	29.2	24.8	42.2	3.8	70.8 (66.6, 75.0)
Maharashtra	404	40.9	20.5	35.6	3.0	59.0 (54.3, 63.9)
Madhya Pr.	394	35.3	24.1	38.1	2.5	64.7 (60.0, 69.4)
Orissa	407	7.6	22.1	69.8	0.5	92.4 (89.8, 95.0)
West Bengal	437	18.8	34.1	47.1	0.0	81.2 (77.5, 84.9)
Pooled	3291	33.1	23.7	41.1	2.1	66.9 (65.3, 68.5)